

## Canada's Colonial Project Begins in Africa: Undoing and Reworking the Inaugural Scenes of Colonial-Racial Violence

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**ABSTRACT** Black captivity and colonial violence in New France are distinct but interlinked social formations. This article develops an analysis of captive-colonial violence in Canada by tracing how these two formations are interlinked in practice and in discourse. It examines two "inaugural" scenes: the capture of a "Black Mooress" on the coast of present-day Mauritania in 1441 and the 1603 meeting between a French expedition and the people they called "Savages" on the shores of the St-Lawrence River in Canada. The first pertains to anti-Black violence and captivity. The second pertains to colonial violence and genocide. While the two scenes are usually treated as analytically distinct, as well as temporally and geographically distant, this article brings them together. Doing so is important as it shows how the practical and discursive conditions leading to the two scenes overlapped and how each scene depends on the other. This reading of captive-colonial violence disrupts linear conceptions of time and discrete conceptions of geography to pull "distant" scenes into proximity. Through this approach, the article shows how the two scenes are interlinked in the formation of a new lingua franca of anti-Black violence and genocidal colonial violence in Canada, however different and/or incommensurable they may be

**KEYWORDS** Canada, slavery, colonial, modernity, Africa

# Introduction

And, as they were going on their way, they saw a black Mooress come along (who was slave of those on the hill), and though some of our men were in favor of letting her pass to avoid a fresh skirmish, to which the enemy did not invite them,— for, since they were in sight and their number more than doubled ours, they could not be of such faint hearts as to allow a chattel of theirs to be thus carried off: —despite this, Antam Goncalvez bade them go at her; for if (he said) they scorned that encounter, it might make their foes pluck up courage against them. And now you see how the word of a captain prevaieth among men used to obey; for, following his will, they seized the Mooress.

—Gomes Eanes de Zurara<sup>1</sup>

On the twenty-seventh, accompanied by the two savages whom Monsieur du Pont brought to make report of what they had seen in France, and of the good reception the King had given them, we sought the savages at St. Matthew's point, which is a league from Tadoussac. As soon as we had landed we went to the lodge of their grand Sagamore, named Anadabijou, where we found him and some eighty or a hundred of his companions, making *Tabagie* (that is to say, a feast). He received us very well, after the fashion of the country, and made us sit down beside him, while all the savages ranged themselves one next to the other on both sides of the lodge.

—Samuel de Champlain<sup>2</sup>

The two scenes above are distinct but interlinked. The first points to Black captivity in present-day Mauritania in 1441, while the other points to colonial violence on the shores of the St. Lawrence River in Canada in 1603. In this article, I develop an analysis of colonial-racial violence in Canada by tracing the linkages between these two scenes and the social formations that shaped and grew from them. I show how the two scenes, though seemingly distant in geographical and temporal terms, were proximate and interdependent in their inauguration and produced a new “grammar” of anti-Black violence and colonial violence. This analysis is located in a relational approach and moves against the grain of much historiography and critical theory, which tends to cleave apart the formations of anti-Black captivity, on the one hand, and settler colonial violence, on the other. To apprehend their interdependence, however, requires a disruption of conventional (linear) conceptions of time in order to seize how each scene depended on the other.

The terms used in this article draw significantly from Hortense Spillers. Following Spillers, I use the term “scene” to describe both an ensemble of actions and a surrounding narrative. I also adopt her term “grammar” to mean a technology of imagination through which a set of relations to things and between them are world-building.<sup>3</sup> With these terms, it is

possible to examine two inaugural scenes (that is, scenes *considered* inaugural), the new grammars they produced, and finally the interdependence of these scenes and grammars.<sup>4</sup> The first scene, the above-cited capture of the Black Moors on the coast of present-day Mauritania in 1441, produces a new anti-Black grammar written onto African bodies, a writing that transforms African people into “ungendered,” fungible, and violatable “flesh.”<sup>5</sup> It is considered the beginning of a construction of Blackness as and through a violence that requires no justification.<sup>6</sup> The second scene, the 1603 meeting between the French expedition and the people they called “Savages,” produces an anti-Indigenous grammar written onto Indigenous bodies and lands. It is considered the beginning of (the project leading to) the construction of Indigeneity as erasable through the (beginning of the) permanent occupation of the northeast coast of North America.<sup>7</sup> While these two scenes appear distinct, I will show in this article that the first establishes the terms of the second. The second, meanwhile, repeats, completes, elaborates further, alters them. The two scenes, in other words, are interdependent.

My analysis in this article requires a disruption of linear time. In so doing, it draws on Tiffany Lethabo King’s analytical revision of slavery and conquest in *The Black Shoals*.<sup>8</sup> Building on Black grammars and theorizing of conquest pinpointing the coast of Africa and the 1440s as the inaugural place and time of colonial-racial violence,<sup>9</sup> King readjusts temporally and geographically the inaugural scenes and relations of slavery and conquest into a single process or formation in multiple, interrelated, and porous sequences. The reworking suggested after King, as the following pages show, anticipates and avoids four important limitations of focusing exclusively on one of the sequences: the reification of the 1492 rupture in the critical and analytical apparatus of (non-Indigenous and non-Black) settler colonial studies; the reduction of the abjection of Blackness, in the context of colonial and genocidal occupation, to labor and exploitation, as well as the relative absence of the analytical category of Indigeneity in north-American Black studies; the essentializing of colonial borders to think coloniality in North America; and the equivalence between the ontological totality of anti-Blackness, most notably elaborated in recent years by Afropessimist thinkers,<sup>10</sup> and the non-relationality of the formation of anti-Black violence, that is the assumed equivalence between ontological non-relationality and the impossibility of any commonality or relation with distinct formations of violence.

The first of those limitations narrows colonial violence in the Americas to a white-colonizer-conqueror/Indigenous dyadic model and keeps the abjection of Blackness out of euro-American structuring colonial antagonisms, the category of labor being instrumental and additional rather than the abjection of Blackness being fundamental.<sup>11</sup> The second, consequently, fails to take into account, in understanding the abjection of Blackness, that which is in excess of the analytical tandem of labor and exploitation, namely what Saidiya Hartman has called the “fungibility of the commodity,”<sup>12</sup> and dislocates the violence of

slavery from colonial violence.<sup>13</sup> The third considers colonial violence and coloniality within the geopolitical borders of settler colonial projects regardless of colonial intentions and practices outside these borders, and extracts colonial and genocidal violence in North America from geo-historical processes to which they are linked and even co-constitutive.<sup>14</sup> The fourth conflates the fundamental singularity of the ontological abjection of Blackness and the “noncommunicability” of the formation of anti-Black violence in the face of iterations and technologies of violence that grow out of it, repeat it, influence it or elaborate it further, and thus fails to distinguish singularity and interdependent formations.<sup>15</sup> This article does not reject nor attend to the Afropessimist meta-critique of relationality, and instead argues (in some respects with Frank B. Wilderson) that however different, isolated and/or incommensurable anti-Blackness and Indigenous genocide may be, the making of these distinct forms of violence is relational. By recentering the processes and formations in multiple, interrelated and porous sequences, the undoing and reworking suggested here, after King, allows for the excavation of the similarity and relationality of singular and distinct formations of colonial-racial violence from its inaugural scenes: “The screams of Africans or the ‘grammar of accumulation and fungibility,’ as well as Native death banes or ‘grammar of genocide,’ become audible and can create new soundscapes.”<sup>16</sup>

In general terms, this article brings a new approach to an oft-noted event in Canadian history: the rupture of 1603, the *idea* of the inaugural scene of the colonial project first named “New France.” In most accounts, while Champlain is considered the founder of Quebec city, the 1603 scene is considered the beginning of “the possibility of settlement” in today’s Canada,<sup>17</sup> which implies the beginning of colonial violence, dispossession, and genocide. With this scene at the origin of Canada, anti-Black violence is necessarily secondary, with its first recorded event, that is the first enslaved African to set foot in today’s Canada, occurring in 1629. Thinking with King, however, makes it possible to bring another scene, the 1441 raid on the coast of present-day Mauritania, into relation with the first. As I will show, the two scenes are more closely linked than conventional accounts suggest and recognizing their interconnection helps to disrupt the analytical practices that keep them separate and distinct. The resulting analysis shows colonial-racial violence in Canada as a process and formation in multiple, interrelated, and porous sequences, and in so doing refuses the ongoing erasure of anti-Blackness in Canada by locating it at the very foundation of the Canadian settler colonial project. Thus, while this article contributes to the growing conversations on anti-Blackness and colonial violence in the Americas, it is also to be read more specifically as a deciphering and unraveling of the mythological Canadian exceptionalism. Following the movement between Portuguese captain Antão Gonçalves’s 1441 raid on the coast of present-day Mauritania, itself to be thought of as the mediation between what it reproduces and what it breaks from (section 1), and the 1603 meeting between the French expedition and the people Samuel de Champlain called “Savages” (section 2), a movement that reveals itself as non-linear (section 3), this article

suggests a contextualized *lingua franca* of anti-Black violence and genocidal and colonial violence in Canada, however different and/or incommensurable they may be.

## 1. 1441, or Antão Gonçalves's Raid as the Inaugural Scene of Black captivity

The Portuguese expedition led by Antão Gonçalves in 1441 is the most famous to reach the coast of present-day Mauritania, though it was not the first. Since 1436, writes Gomes Eanes de Zurara in his *Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea*, a few Portuguese vessels ventured in this direction with similar intentions and economic imperatives, but the extraction has remained non-human—the Portuguese would certainly desire captives since they found traces of “footmarks of men and camels,”<sup>18</sup> but according to their limited knowledge of the area, and due to their limited effective capacities, they settle for sea lions. The Portuguese expedition led by Antão Gonçalves in 1441 is not the first to reach the coast of present-day Mauritania but, berthed near Cabo Blanco like his predecessors, Gonçalves is willing to prove his devotion even more, as his words reported by Zurara suggest, by exceeding Prince Infante Dom Henrique's expectations: “O How fair a thing it would be if we, who have come to this land for a cargo of such petty merchandise, were to meet with the good luck to bring the first captives before the face of our Prince.”<sup>19</sup>

Surrounded by nine men and convinced by the word of his predecessors of a human presence on these lands, Gonçalves advances inland, moving away from the coast over a distance of three miles. The heat, however, is overwhelming, writes Zurara, and the footmarks suggest that forty to fifty potential captives are going the opposite direction, toward the coast: “My friends, there is nothing more to do here; our toil is great, while the profit to arise from following up this path meseemeth small, for these men are travelling to the place whence we have come, and our best course would be to turn back towards them.”<sup>20</sup> His intuition is right; just as they cut back toward the sea, continues Zurara, Gonçalves and his men see a naked man “following a camel, with two assegais in his hand.”<sup>21</sup> By their sheer number they make him their first captive, despite his resistance, and decide to cautiously reach their vessel as they sight on a hill nearby the group they assume their captive to be a part of. And it is in so doing, as the introductory epigraph describes, that Gonçalves and his men spot a Black Moress, a Moress and/but ‘Black’ that Zurara assumes to be the slave of the group sighted on the hill, with which the Portuguese did not however get to talk. “Following his will, they seized the Moress.”<sup>22</sup>

The scene above inaugurates Euro-modern anti-Black captivity and violence. I refer to this as a scene, following Hortense Spillers, to suggest the ensemble of actions but also the narrative. The scene includes the material violence of captivity, as well as the desires

subtending the violence that began with Antão Gonçalves's 1441 raid. At the same time, it includes the symbolic violence of the racial taxonomy that encircles and supports captivity, a grammar written onto the captive body by force. In the scene, pre-existing conceptions of the body, including its gender, are overwritten by conceptions that license and invite violence. In the process, African beings are transformed into what Spillers calls Black "flesh," the degree zero of social conceptualization—before and outside subjectivity and will. For the first time in human history, as Achille Mbembe summarizes, "the principle of race and the subject of the same name were put to work under the sign of capital."<sup>23</sup> Here, a subject-object is produced for which gender will be accounted for strictly in relation to the creation and reproduction of value, altogether outside human sexuality. As Spillers writes, "The female in 'Middle Passage,' as the apparently smaller physical mass, occupies 'less room' in a directly translatable money economy. But she is, nevertheless, quantifiable by the same rules of accounting as her male counterpart."<sup>24</sup>

The raid recounted by Gomes Eanes de Zurara in his *Chronicle* marks the beginning of European enslaving presence in Africa, of the transatlantic slave trade and consequently of the Afro-diasporic fungible commodity ("the Black slave"), but also of a new grammar. The latter involves the materialization of a structuring taxonomy based on phenotypical characteristics and social status to justify enslavement, as well as the writing of this grammar on the body qua flesh. As outlined by historian Herman Lee Bennett:

By their actions, the Portuguese launched the transatlantic slave trade in whose wake the early modern African diaspora emerged and in which the "slave" constituted the charter subject. Through the capture of the "Mooreess," but in particular by marking her as distinct from the Moors on the basis of juridical status and phenotype, the Portuguese introduced a taxonomy that distinguished Moors from blackamoors, infidels from pagans, and Africans from blacks, sovereign from sovereignless subjects, and free persons from slaves.<sup>25</sup>

The scene thus encapsulates the inaugural Euro-modern anti-Black violence. But the 1441 raid and its narrative are of limited use as a starting point to theorize anti-Black violence if we approach them outside the broader history that enabled and shaped it. As Bennett suggests, the 1441 raid is best conceived as a structuring mediation between what it reproduces and what it departs from. It is, as I have suggested, an inaugural scene, but we need nevertheless to see it within the continuity of an exogenous social construction of Africa, within the continuity of diplomatic relations between African and European entities, and finally as a paradigmatic *break* from Euro-Christian discourses of (re)conquest. Such attention allows for a better understanding of 1441 as a critical moment, without giving in to its historiographic form of what Michel de Certeau calls the "writing that conquers."<sup>26</sup> The writing that conquers, de Certeau argues, "forces the silent body to speak" and supposes temporal breaks according the enunciating position.<sup>27</sup> If the "vindication of facts repeats

the forms of their identification [and] [i]ts implicit corollary is one of the preservation of norms and ideologies which determine the division, classification, and organization depending on the *same* postulates,<sup>28</sup> then a critical stance toward the identification of a “beginning” seeks to temper these shortcomings and question the violence of writing history rather than reproduce it.

### Undoing the Break: Africa as Quintessential Exterior and the European Discourse on Conquest

To understand the new grammar outlined above, we need to consider the longer history in which Africa was constructed in knowledge by other regions and peoples, and locate the readjustment of European discourse on conquest.

At least since Homer’s *Odyssey*, Africa represented the literal end of European knowledge, as the “*symbol of what is as much outside life as beyond life.*”<sup>29</sup> This lack of knowledge, however, does not refrain from producing philosophical and geographic “truths”; on the contrary, as Mbembe suggests, the difficulty of accessing the continent’s inland triggers its representation as the space of the inhumane and the “inextricability of humans, animals, and nature, of life and death, of the presence of one in the other, of the death that lives in life.”<sup>30</sup> This is what the different etymological possibilities of the words preceding the lexicon of “Africa” convey: “Ethiopia,” “Sudan,” or “Niger.” These terms, as Christopher L. Miller writes, similarly suggest a subjective auto-constitution through an opposition to what represents Blackness, the impact of the sun on the skin, the burn and the “nature.” It is to those same representations that the different etymological constructions of Africa later refer.<sup>31</sup>

This symbolic work produces what Valentin Yves Mudimbe calls a “geography of monstrosity,”<sup>32</sup> a geography that would then be symbolically reworked from the mid-fifteenth century onward. With this, Mudimbe argues, “the continent became an inexhaustible well of phantasms.”<sup>33</sup> This construction provided the backdrop to European (discourses on) conquest and to European understandings of European-African encounters in the fifteenth century like the 1441 raid, even as the latter significantly reworked this construction. Such a “geography of monstrosity,” or “well of phantasms,” made possible the materialization of a structuring taxonomy based on phenotypical characteristics and social status to justify enslavement, as well as the displacing of the meaning of conquest at the dawn of European Atlantic expansion.

Another important development in European thought was the conception of conquest and, as Herman Lee Bennett reminds, of its legitimacy: “Is it licit to invade the lands that infidels possess, and if it is licit, why is it licit?”<sup>34</sup> While such questions are not rare to Christendom, it is more precisely in canonist Sinibaldo Fieschi’s (Pope Innocent IV from 1243 to 1254)

response to it that Herman Lee Bennett suggests we locate the legal regime and political thought leading to 1441's inaugural scene. In his *Commentaria Doctissima in Quinque Libros Decretalium*, written at a time when the Church felt a pressing need to reaffirm its authority, Sinibaldo Fieschi's contribution states that, within certain parameters, *dominium* and the right to live beyond the grace of God should be granted to pagans and infidels in and out of Christian societies. Similar discussions and propositions will proliferate from the late fifteenth century onward, among these Nicolas V's papal bulls and the famous Valladolid debate opposing priest Bartolomé de Las Casas and doctor Juan Gines Sepulveda in 1550–1551, but it is useful to insist on Fieschi's specific relevance regarding 1441's inaugural scene.

Until the thirteenth century, (re)conquest as it is led throughout the *Reconquista*<sup>35</sup> generally implied, on both sides, a respect for the beliefs and traditions of the defeated enemy remaining under the conqueror's territorial jurisdiction. But when the Christian kingdoms begin to have the upper hand, their economic and expansionist ambitions prompt a selective rereading of Fieschi's prescriptions. Thus, as Bennett explains:

despite the precedent established by Innocent IV's commentary, temporal authorities drastically transformed their institutional interaction with the non-Christian minority, which carried over into their relationship with the peoples of Guinea. As the Church's hegemony receded, the monarch's power expanded, but dogma continued to affect the secular authorities' practices and nascent traditions.<sup>36</sup>

The first Portuguese expeditions to the coast of Guinea had no intentions of establishing settlements, signing treaties, religious conversion, or making territorial claims. They are driven instead by economic possibilities. Also, while the discourse of conquest appears throughout Zurara's narrative of the 1441 raid, as Fieschi's rereading by secular authorities would bend it, the practical and moral prescriptions and precautions it laid out are set aside and its usage is primarily strategic and argumentative within intra-European discussions. That being said, regardless of their mercantile intentions, the first Portuguese voyages were discursively framed within the parameters of the above intra-Christendom debates on Christian/non-Christian relations and conquest. As Bennett explains, "as the Portuguese and subsequently the Castilians ventured farther south into the 'land of the blacks,' they constantly had to contend with theoretical and practical recognition that Guinea *did not represent terra nullius*."<sup>37</sup>

In line with the canonical prescriptions restricting to specific situations the possibility of reducing infidels to slavery, the Portuguese insisted on the unique responsibility of Guinean sovereigns in the deprivation of liberty, thereby absolving themselves of any potential moral fault. But these bending efforts, which at the same time renegotiate the use of the discourse of conquest and prohibit explorers from considering the African continent as a



land without masters, are only relevant between Europeans. Unlike the telos of the construction of Africans as slaves would suggest, at the time of the first encounters, because of both canonical prescriptions *and* limited effective material capacities,

though the Portuguese referred to Africans as objects, in practice they could not render Guinea's inhabitants into this prescribed role and desperately sought an effective strategy with which to obtain "profit" from the "land of the Blacks." Diplomacy, with its focus on institutional formalities and mutual, if grudging, respect for difference, generally offered personal securities and tenuous recognition of private property that effectively facilitated trade.<sup>38</sup>

It is before and after the diplomatic imperatives and contrived consent; it is offshore, on board, and in the hold of the ship, and in the discursive and geographic space of European claims to sovereignty that the transformation of African beings into Black flesh is operated and written.

These observations allow us to return to the scene of Antão Gonçalves's 1441 raid. The scene, I argued, encapsulates Euro-modern anti-Black inaugural violence: the material violence of captivity and quenched desires for captive objects, and the symbolic violence of the racial taxonomy that supports it, as well as the symbolic violence of the transformation of African beings into Black flesh. Its importance, however, its marking as "beginning" must be considered according to what it reproduces and what it breaks from. The scene, we can now see, involved the re-actualization of a European construction of Africa as the quintessential exterior and the readjustment of European discourse on conquest to fit a mercantile diplomatic strategy expanded by a contrived consent. This reconception makes it possible to consider how the scene is related to another scene, the 1603 meeting between the French expedition and the people they called "Savages." The latter, I will now show, involved a mobilization of possessive desires, of the taxonomical gesture, and of the contextual reworkings of conquest, diplomacy, and contrived consent—elements essential to anti-Black violence.

## 2. 1603, or The "Kind Reception Accorded to the French by the Grand Sagamore of the Aavages of Canada" as the Inaugural Scene of Colonial Violence

The famous French expedition with which geographer and explorer Samuel de Champlain reaches the St. Lawrence River for the first time, in 1603, is not the first expedition to reach

the St. Lawrence River, nor the first to reach what European geographers have called America. A little over a century earlier, in 1492, following physician Paolo Toscanelli's directions to get to the "places of spices," Admiral Don Cristobal Colon's fleet would approach the archipelago of Lucayes Islands, and the island he would (re)name San Salvador.<sup>39</sup> A rather large island, he writes on October 13, 1492, rather green also, inhabited by "very docile" people. Then, some forty years after him, farther north this time, having sailed along the coast of "Terre-Neuffue" until the Gaspé bay, navigator Jacques Cartier would follow the St. Lawrence River until Hochelaga (present-day Montréal). The 1603 voyage, though not the first to reach America or the St. Lawrence, is significant nevertheless. In the overlapping of intentions and actions, of settling ambitions and their planning and achievement, it marks the first moment of the process of foundation of New France. It thus bridges the gap between possessive aspirations of settlement, exploitation, and exploration, and their material and discursive translation within the specific parameters of the French presence in the northeast of the continent.

Having left Honfleur on March 15, 1603, the expedition organized by Aymar de Chaste and lead by Pont-Gravé (designated to represent de Chaste in America) reaches the mouth of "Canada river" on May 20, to reach Tadoussac six days later and then St. Matthew's Point the day after. On board was Samuel de Champlain, an observer whose uncle, sailor Guillaume Allène, one of the rare pilots from La Rochelle who visited the African coast more than once during the sixteenth century, had a significant influence on him.<sup>40</sup> Samuel de Champlain is invited by de Chaste to document the territory, its resources and people, and to plan exploration, exploitation, and settlement. As David Hackett Fisher explains, "Trade was necessary to the voyage, but its primary purpose was to study the possibility of settlement in New France."<sup>41</sup> Thus "as soon as [they] had landed" Champlain starts noticing, writing down and interpreting.<sup>42</sup> Received "after the fashion of the country," as the introductory epigraph describes, from his first encounter with some eighty or a hundred "savages" Champlain offers a description of their "rejoicing," their "endurance of hunger," their "maliciousness," their "beliefs and false ideas," their clothing, the "stark" nakedness of women and girls, of "how they walk on snow."<sup>43</sup> And from this taxonomical exercise he then recommends, "I think that if any one would show them how to live, and teach them to till the ground, and other matters, they would learn very well; for I assure you that plenty of them have good judgment, and answer very properly any question put to them."<sup>44</sup>

The "Kind reception accorded to the French by the grand Sagamore of the savages of Canada," the *utshemau* (grand captain in Innu-Aimun, the Innu language) Anadabijou, will be the occasion for Champlain to inscribe, categorize and contemplate his hosts in relation to the sought lands, and in relation to settlement, exploration, and exploitation possibilities.<sup>45</sup> Their being, Champlain describes either implicitly or explicitly, is instrumental, malleable according to colonial necessities and possessive desires. But while

their written inferiority supports and legitimates French claims, while it appears for example providential to “show them how to live” as they are “almost constrained to eat one another,” the encounter, Champlain writes, results in what he deems mutual reciprocity.<sup>46</sup> Anadabijou, according to Champlain, would say that “he was well content that His said Majesty should people of their country, and make war on their enemies, and that there was no nation in the world to which they wished more good than to the French.”<sup>47</sup> In relation to the sought lands, and in relation to settlement, exploration, and exploitation possibilities, the strategic back and forth—between the inferiority legitimating the French presence and what appears as a “reciprocity,” allowing the French to speak of “alliance”—does not appear to be in contradiction. “It is the Innu that had to teach the French how to live on these lands. It is them who taught the French everything and, once they knew enough, the French stopped caring about the Innu.”<sup>48</sup> Alongside cartographic work and the survey of the territory’s resources, the description of the inferiority and utility of Indigenous people and at the same time the negotiation of their (potential, necessary, said reciprocal) proximity appears, beginning in 1603, discursively and materially essential to a permanent French presence in the northeast of the continent.

The scene encapsulates Euro-modern colonial inaugural violence in the northeast of the American continent: the material violence of occupation by erasure, by the quenching of possessive desires, by strategy and by destruction, and the symbolic violence of the racial taxonomy that supports it as well as the symbolic violence of the transformation of Indigenous being into a malleable and erasable object, before social conceptualization, before subjectivity. For the first time on the northeast coast of the continent, permanent European occupation is contemplated and materialized while Indigenous peoples are thought of in relation to sought lands—gender, for example, only being considered in regards to the proximity to nature. The 1603 encounter Champlain writes about in *Of Savages* signals the beginning of European possessive presence on the shores of the St. Lawrence River, of the overlapping of systematic knowledge and occupation, and of European framing of Indigenous (physical and symbolic) being, malleable and erasable, before (European) humanity and naturally subsumed beneath its structuring claims and possessive desires. It also opens, at the same time, the implementation of a specifically French strategy of negotiating proximity with Indigenous peoples of the northeast of the continent.

The scene thus encapsulates the inaugural violence of European possessive and dispossessive presence on the shores of the St. Lawrence River. It represents a double process of occupation and erasure, as well as the contextual overlapping of economic, theological, political, epistemological, and ontological rationalities underlying this process. Like the 1441 raid, however, we cannot understand the 1603 encounter as a punctual

event, an event outside history. Like the 1441 raid, the 1603 encounter is most relevant as a structuring mediation between what it reproduces and what it departs from.

### Undoing the Break: 1441 as a Prelude towards the Project Called New France

The critical importance of the 1603 scene is neither punctual nor ahistorical, and has to be considered at the same time in the continuity of the 1441 rationality remediated by Christopher Columbus starting in 1492, in the continuity of European presence on the continent since, and, finally, as a break from the preceding modalities of the French presence.

"There are many birds, which sing very sweetly. There are a great number of palm trees of a different kind from those in Guinea and from ours, of a middling height, the trunks without that covering, and the leaves very large, with which they thatch their houses."<sup>49</sup>

Approximately ten years before setting sail to the "places of spices," Christopher Columbus would visit the west coast of Africa, would visit the Portuguese fort of El Mina. As suggested by the way he describes Cuba on 28 October 1492, this would be an indispensable prelude for him on reaching the Americas. The overhaul of the scholastic geography of feudal Christendom that until then suggested an ontological border between inhabitable and uninhabitable lands, but also the terms of the political rationality legitimating the overlaying of discovery and possession leading to 1441, Sylvia Wynter argues, structured the disposition and claims Columbus laid upon arrival:

The new ethico-behavioral system of 'reason-of-the-state' its new mode of political rationality led him, on arriving, not only to take immediate possession of the new lands in the name of Spain, but also to deal with the peoples of these lands as a population group that could be justly made to serve three main purposes. One of these purposes was to expand the power of the Spanish state that had backed his voyage. The second was to repay his financial backers, as well as to enrich himself and his family with all the gold and tribute he could extort from the indigenous peoples, even from making some into *cabezas de indios y indias* (heads of Indian men and women), who could be sold as slaves, in order to support the acquired noble status that was part of the contract he had drawn up with the Crown before the voyage (as a psycho-social status drive that was to also impel his behaviors). His third purpose was to help accelerate the spread of Christianity all over the world, in time for the Second Coming of Christ, which he fervently believed to be imminent.<sup>50</sup>

To get to where there should not have been land, *this land*; identifying, describing and naming as desire and projection of immediate possession—San Salvador over Guanahani; considering the peoples encountered exclusively to the extent of their usefulness, and in

regards to the non-homogeneity of human species that locates their being before rationality, before theology and before politics; it is following those general terms that European expeditions, notably those of Amerigo Vespucci, Vasco Núñez Balboa, Hernando Cortés and, further north, John Cabot and Giovanni da Verrazano, would be led after 1492. It is, also, among those voyages that Jacques Cartier's expeditions also appear as a historical point of transition. If, until then, the French expedition led by Cartier was sailing on known waters, on June 14, 1534 Cartier's expedition is said to be the first to explore, document, and "capitalize on the potential" found west of Newfoundland, and at the same time to encounter the Indigenous peoples of the land.<sup>51</sup> The first to explore, document and "capitalize on the potential"<sup>52</sup> found west of Newfoundland, therefore to stage possession notably by planting a cross with the inscription "VIVE LE ROY DE FRANCE,"<sup>53</sup> a gesture that, Mudimbe reminds, is in direct continuity with, among others, the Portuguese presence in Guinea:

Generally, such a ceremony presented three major characteristics (Keller et al., 1938): (a) the construction of a physical sign bearing the royal arms, such as a pillar (Portuguese), a landmark or even a simple pile of stones (Spanish), or a cross (English and French); (b) a solemn declaration, perhaps presenting the letters patent received from the king, announcing the new sovereignty and indicating that the possession is taken in the name of, or for, the king; and (c) a symbolization of the new jurisdiction.<sup>54</sup>

The first to encounter the Indigenous peoples of the land with this prospective intention, therefore Cartier is also at the origin of the first European framing, on this part of the continent, of Indigenous (physical and symbolic) being, malleable and erasable, before (European) humanity and naturally subsumed beneath its structuring claims.

Cartier would come back twice again, in 1535 and 1541, with intentions each time more specific, commissions each time more accurate: from exploring Hochelaga and Saguenay, to the royal will of establishing a permanent colony on the shores of the St. Lawrence River, under the authority of Jean-François de La Roque, to expedite the exploitation of resources. Those efforts, however, will not fulfill French aspirations and will remain experimental; they will not translate into material accumulation nor effective possession. That said, as Gordon reminds,

Despite its failure, Cartier's little colony at Charlesbourg-Royal was the first substantially documented European attempt to settle in northern North America. He initiated French contact with and claims on this part of the New World. And although Cartier's gold and diamonds proved worthless, subsequent explorers, such as Champlain, who followed in his footsteps found other wealth in the land.<sup>55</sup>

The 1603 meeting Champlain tells us about appears in straight continuation of the voyages of Columbus and Cartier (and, we can suggest, of his uncle Guillaume Allène in Africa), follows their intentions and aspirations and follows the manner in which they contextually remediate the learnings of 1441. But Champlain's 1603 meeting also significantly departs from them, as much as from the few French expeditions and settlement attempts following Cartier in the second half of the sixteenth century, because it succeeds in materializing, on the northeast coast of the continent, the objectives previously laid out.<sup>56</sup> Until Champlain, writes Marcel Trudel, neither discovery nor geographical and cartographical work appear among French priorities since Cartier.<sup>57</sup> But after the wars of religion, ended by the Edict of Nantes (1598), French ambitions northeast of the American continent are not only renewed but also appear tangible; the end of internal conflicts frees up resources and encourages the development of exogenous preoccupations—it announces expansionist possibilities. As Brian Brazeau suggests, "Thus, a site that had long been called New France for various reasons was propitious, in the early seventeenth century, for attempts to fulfill the promise of the name through settlement."<sup>58</sup>

In a Royal Commission dated November 8, 1603, destined to Sieur de Mons, King Henri IV establishes the objectives of the next expedition Samuel de Champlain will be a part of. The commission stresses the need to

bring about the conversion to Christianity of the tribes inhabiting this country, who are God-less barbarians, without faith or religion, and to lead and instruct them in the belief and profession of our faith and religion, and to bring them out of the ignorance and infidelity in which they are sunk; having also long since seen, by the report of the ship-captains, pilots, merchants, and others who for many years have visited, frequented, and trafficked with various tribes of these parts, how fruitful, advantageous, and useful to us, our estates, and our subjects would be the occupation, possession, and colonization thereof.<sup>59</sup>

The commission is written in such a way that it repeats with the utmost precision the response offered by doctor Juan Ginès Sepulveda, regarding European conquest of the Americas, to a question that in turn repeats with the utmost precision the one asked by canonist Sinibaldo Fieschi in 1245, that which determined the legal regime and political thought leading to the inaugural scene of Euro-modern anti-Black violence in 1441. As to whether it is "licit for His Highness to wage war on those Indians before preaching them faith to subject them to his Empire,"<sup>60</sup> by mid-sixteenth century doctor Sepulveda answers:

I say that from the beginning it is licit to subject those barbarians so they abandon their idolatry and bad rituals, to restrain them from obstructing preaching, to convert them with more liberty and ease so they won't fall back into heresy; so that their faith strengthens

always more with the good company of Spanish Christians, and they abandon barbaric rituals and customs.<sup>61</sup>

The materialization of French aspirations being underway, the king confirms what was previously laid out, in a general commission that is especially explicit about the contextual colonial strategy that will be carried out for the establishment of what the French called New France: "Henri IV's gesture shows that the voyage is part of a strategy of territorial organizing and affirmation that includes a politics of alliances."<sup>62</sup> Alliance, the commission reads, is strategic rather than ethical:

to form, maintain, and sedulously observe the treaties and alliances upon which you and they shall agree, provided that they on their part do likewise, and failing this, to make open war upon them to constrain and bring them to such terms as you shall judge necessary for the honour, obedience, and service of God, the establishment, maintenance, and preservation of our authority among them.<sup>63</sup>

If both Innu and French diplomats foresee a certain advantage to good relationship, for the French, alliance must be formed and respected for economic (exclusivity), exploitation and occupation/settlement purposes.<sup>64</sup> The "nation to nation" relationship the French are seeking, therefore, follows rather than precedes possessive intentions; in a context where French ambitions, as much as the Portuguese approaching the coast of Africa, depend on their diplomatic capacities, alliance as contrived consent is a means rather than a goal.

The 1603 scene of the meeting described by Samuel de Champlain, I have argued, encapsulates Euro-modern colonial inaugural violence in the northeast of the American continent. The scene involves the material violence of occupation by erasure, by the quenching of possessive desires, by strategy and by destruction, and the symbolic violence of the racial taxonomy that supports it, of the transformation of Indigenous being into a malleable and erasable object, before social conceptualization, before subjectivity. We can now understand it anew, however, by considering how the 1441 rationality was remediated by Christopher Columbus starting in 1492, how 1603 is in the continuity of European presence on the continent since then, and, finally, how it breaks from the preceding modalities of the French presence: in the remediation of possessive desires, the taxonomical gesture of classification and subjection, the contextual negotiation of conquest as discourse, of diplomacy and of the contrived consent, and at the same time, in its specific materialization initiated with the project called New France. New France, in other words, starts in 1441 in as much as the Portuguese raid of 1441 continues through 1603.

### 3. Mathieu Da Costa, *Mathieu from the Coast*: Challenging the Unilaterality of the Geo-Temporal Progression from 1441 to 1603

We know very little about Mathieu Da Costa, other than that he must have been the first African to ever reach the northeast region of North America. We also know that it must have been as an interpreter, under contract with Sieur de Mons—under contract, that is, with the person to whom King Henri IV addressed his November 8, 1603 commission, in which are stated the possessive desires and strategic intentions underlying the project called New France; with the person who took Aymar de Chaste's place in 1603 as royal representative and depository of the fur trade monopoly; with the person Champlain would travel again in 1604—and as an interpreter, that is, to secure or help the French with translation and exchanges with Indigenous populations northeast of the American continent. While nothing attests that Mathieu Da Costa did in fact travel to this side of the Atlantic, sources show he signs a contract enrolling him as interpreter for the voyages in Canada, "La Cadie" (Acadia) and "elsewhere" in January 1609 and for up to three years.<sup>65</sup> While nothing attests that Mathieu Da Costa did in fact travel to this side of the Atlantic, the contract he signs with Sieur de Mons at least attests he was considered to have had the required qualification to—help—deal, exchange, negotiate with Indigenous populations on the northeast coast of North America.

Mathieu Da Costa, "from the coast," probably holds his name from the Portuguese presence in Africa. Is he the descendant of a family of interpreters, upon which the Portuguese depend starting in 1441? From whom, where and how did he acquire the qualifications sought after by Sieur de Mons for his voyages, and what are the said qualifications? Da Costa could be a second, third, or fourth generation interpreter, or not; he could, or not, be the descendant of an interpreter who traveled with a European expedition to America before 1608, or he could have traveled himself to America before this date. He could have acquired said qualifications alongside Indigenous people in Europe, in Amsterdam where sources say he was in 1607, in Rouen where sources say he was in 1609, or elsewhere.<sup>66</sup> He could also have learned from Europeans well acquainted with North America, or he could simply be well acquainted with European first contact "codes," or with one or more pidgins, without specific knowledge of one or more Indigenous languages. Da Costa could also have never taken part in Sieur de Mons's expeditions; sources cannot attest to his being on the American continent. But we know that the qualifications he is assumed to have predate the (non-)rupture of which 1603 is the start, and that—the extent of—his usefulness is necessarily mediated by the colonial project called New France.



We know very little about Mathieu Da Costa, but what we know and what we can speculate is that the qualifications he is assumed to have, and thus the extent of his usefulness, outline a non-linear and multidirectional movement. His qualifications, as much as their acquisition, challenge the unilaterality of the geo-temporal progression from 1441 to 1603, from the African coast to the shores of the St. Lawrence River. While 1441 paves the way for 1603, the northeast of North America as an ontological, epistemological, and political formation reaches Da Costa in a different direction. If Mathieu Da Costa is well acquainted with one or more Indigenous languages at the time Sieur de Mons requires his services in Europe, it is because these languages traveled in a direction that interrupts what seemed like a linear and unidirectional trajectory. If, otherwise, Da Costa knows enough, for example, of the Basque pidgin in use in the northeast of North America without (or before) traveling there, it is because it bears traces of Portuguese and even more, potentially, that it grows out of a Portuguese pidgin that would predate it on this side of the Atlantic, independently of the Portuguese pidgin emerging after 1441.<sup>67</sup>

And yet, the parameters of the lived experience of Mathieu Da Costa are renegotiated with the beginning of the colonial project in the northeast of North America. If Mathieu Da Costa is at the center of a litigation between Sieur de Mons and Nicolas de Bauquemare who fight over his services, it is that the—already—significant importance of African interpreters is increased, renewed with colonial projects on the American continent.<sup>68</sup> It is that colonial projects in the Americas determine, further and specify the possibilities emerging with the 1441 raid. If Da Costa appears as an object of desire in view of colonial projects, it is that these projects modulate anti-Black violence. In either case, progression is in crisis; the movement appears as circular rather than linear.

## Conclusion

The 1603 meeting plays and replays the violence of possessive desires and possession, of the taxonomical gesture of classification and subjection, and of the contextual negotiation of conquest, diplomacy, and contrived consent inaugurated in 1441. Backed up against one another, the two scenes inscribe, in corresponding and renewed sequences, in a single ontological, epistemological, and political movement, the inception and formation of anti-Black violence and colonial and genocidal violence, however different and/or incommensurable they may be. New France starts in 1441. The Portuguese raid of 1441 continues through 1603. But the movement, Da Costa shows us, challenges linear progression: if the 1603 meeting contextually replays the ontological, epistemological and political project of 1441, the latter is in turn specified, continued, completed by the violence of occupation that then not only appears as the continuation of the movement but also as the starting point of new rhizomatic sequences and directions. If the movement first seems

progressive and unidirectional, the reworking suggested also calls for a crisis of its progression and linearity. The 1603 meeting is not only the follow-up: it initiates new rhizomic sequences and directions as much as it co-determines, furthers, and specifies the ends of the 1441 scene of the raid—the ends of Black abjection and fungibility that the full extent only unfolds with the projects of the New World.

The conceptual field that emerges from this undoing and reworking of the colonial-racial temporality locates the formations of anti-Black violence and colonial and genocidal violence in a multidirectional movement through distinct yet corresponding and renewed sequences. The operation suggested here, in other words, the undoing of unidirectional progression and the reworking of multidirectional connections, locates the project in formation since New France in this movement between the inaugural scenes of violence. In doing so it begins to excavate the terms of a conversation that broadens our understanding of the specific formations of anti-Black, colonial, and genocidal violence, and at the same time points to their fundamental overlapping. Thus, it begins making audible Black and Indigenous perspectives and possibilities before, across, and after colonial-racial epistemological limits.

## Notes

1. Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *The Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 10. ↩
2. Samuel de Champlain, *The Works of Samuel De Champlain: 1620–1629* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 2013), 297. ↩
3. Hortense J. Spillers, "'Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book,'" *diacritics* 17, no. 2 (1987): <https://doi.org/10.2307/464747> < <https://doi.org/10.2307/464747>> . ↩
4. Historians might see a lack of historiography, or even anachronistic and teleological temptations in what follows. However, this article is less about historical events than about their representations and what these representations do. ↩
5. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe." ↩
6. See Achille Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017). ↩
7. See David Hackett Fisher, *Champlain's Dream* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008). ↩
8. Tiffany Lethabo King, *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019). ↩
9. See Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe"; and Sylvia Wynter, "'1492: A New World View,' Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View," in *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas*, ed. Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press), 5–57. ↩
10. See Frank B. Wilderson, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); and Jared Sexton, "The Social Life of Social Death: On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism," *Intentions* 5 (2011): 1–47. ↩
11. In their extensively discussed 2005 article, for example, Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua suggest that "modes of slavery, and the anti-slavery movement in the United States, were

- premised on earlier and continuing modes of colonization of Indigenous peoples." Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua, "Decolonizing Antiracism," *Social Justice* 4, no. 32 (2005): 130. ↵
12. Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 21. ↵
  13. For example, rather than considering the full scope of anti-Blackness as fungibility and colonial violence, Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang write that "settler colonialism involves the subjection and forced labor of chattel slaves," a distinct form of "indenture whereby excess labor is extracted from the person." Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012) : 6. See also Tiffany King, "Labor's Aphasia: Toward Antiracism as Constitutive to Settler Colonialism," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* (blog), June 10, 2014, <https://decolonization.wordpress.com/2014/06/10/labors-aphasia-toward-antiracism-as-constitutive-to-settler-colonialism> < <https://decolonization.wordpress.com/2014/06/10/labors-aphasia-toward-antiracism-as-constitutive-to-settler-colonialism>> .); George Jerry Sefa Dei, *Reframing Blackness and Black Solidarities through Anti-Colonial and Decolonial Prisms*, (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2017). ↵
  14. For example, discussing the many forms of colonialism in Canadian history, among them what he labels the "Imperial/Commercial Penetration" and "Extractivism" modes, Allan Greer makes no mention of Canadian mining and oil companies abroad. Allan Greer, "Settler Colonialism and Beyond," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 30, no. 1 (2019): 61–86. See also Rinaldo Walcott, "The Problem of the Human: Black Ontologies and 'the Coloniality of Our Being,'" in *Postcoloniality—Decoloniality—Black Critique: Joints and Fissures*, ed. Sabine Broeck and Carsten Junker (Frankfurt and New York: Campus Verlag, 2014), 93–108. ↵
  15. Frank B. Wilderson writes that "Afro-pessimism explores the meaning of Blackness . . . as a structural position of noncommunicability in the face of all other positions." But while he insists on "noncommunicability" and non-relationality, regarding the *formation* of distinct positionalities he suggests that "the relativity of the Indian's relative isolation and relative humanity, the push and pull of Indians' positional tension, is *imbricated with—if not dependent on—the absolute isolation of the Slave.*" Frank B. Wilderson, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010): 59, 53 (emphasis added). ↵
  16. King, *The Black Shoals*, 46. ↵
  17. See Fisher, *Champlain's Dream*; Conrad E. Heidenreich and K. Janet Ritch, *Samuel de Champlain before 1603: Des Sauvages and Other Documents Relating to the Period* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010); Darryl Leroux, "'The Spectacle of Champlain: Commemorating Québec,'" *Borderlands* 9, no. 1 (2010): 1–27. ↵
  18. Zurara, *The Chronicle*, 34. ↵
  19. Zurara, *The Chronicle*, 40. ↵
  20. Zurara, *The Chronicle*, 42. ↵
  21. Zurara, *The Chronicle*, 42. ↵
  22. Zurara, *The Chronicle*, 43. ↵
  23. Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason*, 13. ↵
  24. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe," 72. ↵
  25. Herman Lee Bennett, *African Kings and Black Slaves: Sovereignty and Dispossession in the Early Modern Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 166. ↵
  26. Michel De Certeau, *The Writing of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), XXV. ↵
  27. De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 3. ↵
  28. De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 119–120. ↵
  29. Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason*, 52. ↵

30. Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason*, 49. ↵
31. Christopher L. Miller, *Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 12. ↵
32. Valentin Yves Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 84. ↵
33. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, 70. ↵
34. Bennett, *African Kings and Black Slaves*, 147. ↵
35. The reconquest of the Iberian peninsula by Christian kingdoms. ↵
36. Bennett, *African Kings and Black Slaves*, 155. ↵
37. Bennett, *African Kings and Black Slaves*, 155, emphasis added. ↵
38. Bennett, *African Kings and Black Slaves*, 184–185. ↵
39. Cristoforo Colombo et al., *The Journal of Christopher Columbus (During His First Voyage, 1492–93) and Documents Relating the Voyages of John Cabot and Gaspar Corte Real* (London: Hakluyt society, 1893), 40. ↵
40. See Marcel Delafosse, "L'oncle de Champlain," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 12, no. 2 (1958): 208–16; L.-A. Vigneras, "Encore Le Capitaine Provençal," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 13, no. 4 (1960): 544–549; and Marcel Fournier, "Le Point Sur La Naissance De Samuel De Champlain," *Cap-aux-Diamants: la revue d'histoire du Québec* 134 (2018): 8–10. ↵
41. Fisher, *Champlain's Dream*, 127. ↵
42. Champlain, *The Works of Samuel De Champlain*, 297. ↵
43. Champlain, *The Works of Samuel De Champlain*, 306. ↵
44. Champlain, *The Works of Samuel De Champlain*, 308. ↵
45. Champlain, *The Works of Samuel De Champlain*, 297. ↵
46. Champlain, *The Works of Samuel De Champlain*, 308. ↵
47. Champlain, *The Works of Samuel De Champlain* 300. ↵
48. Sylvie Vincent et Joséphine Bacon, "Les Sources Orales Innues: La Fondation de Québec et Ses Conséquences," in *Au croisement de nos destins: Quand Uepishtikueiau devint Québec*, ed. Yves Chrétien, Denus Delâge, et Sylvie Vincent (Montreal: Recherches amérindiennes du Québec, 2009), 65 (author's translation). ↵
49. Cristoforo Colombo and al., *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*, 59. ↵
50. Wynter, "1492," 15–16. ↵
51. Allan Gordon, *The Hero and the Historians: Historiography and the Uses of Jacques Cartier* (Vancouver: University of British-Columbia Press, 2010), 26. Gordon notes that many studies suggest, on the one hand, that Jacques Cartier was not the first European to reach the northeast coast of North America and/or that he potentially visited some ten years before his "first voyage," but also, on the other, that many before him traveled up the St. Lawrence River. ↵
52. Gordon, *The Hero and the Historians*, 26. ↵
53. Société littéraire et historique de Québec, *Voyages De Découverte Au Canada: Entre Les Années 1534 Et 1542* (Québec: W. Cowan et fils, 1843), 40. ↵
54. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, 59. ↵
55. Gordon, *The Hero and the Historians*, 26. ↵

56. Other such expeditions and settlement attempts include those of La Roche and Chauvin in the same geographical space, but also those of Laudonnière, Ribaut or Villegagnon further South. ↵
  57. Marcel Trudel, "Un Nouvel Inventaire Du Saint-Laurent, 1603," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 16, no. 3 (1962): 313–347. ↵
  58. Brian Brazeau, *Writing a New France, 1604–1632: Empire and Early Modern French Identity* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 12. ↵
  59. Marc Lescarbot and Henry Percival Biggar, *History of New France, vol. 11* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1914), 111–112. ↵
  60. Bartolomé de Las Casas and Nestor Capdevila, *La Controverse Entre Las Casas Et Sepúlveda: Précédé De Impérialisme, Empire Et Destruction* (Paris: Vrin, 2007), 207 (author's translation). ↵
  61. Las Casas and Capdevila, *La Controverse Entre Las Casas Et Sepúlveda*, 242 (author's translation). ↵
  62. Camil Girard and Carl Brisson, *Nitassinan Notre Terre: Alliance Et Souveraineté Partagée Du Peuple Innu Au Québec* (Québec: Université Laval, 2014), 30 (author's translation). ↵
  63. Lescarbot and Biggar, *History of New France*, 214. ↵
  64. About the arrival of the French at Uepshtikueiau (Quebec City), Innu oral tradition notably suggests, according to Vincent et Joséphine Bacon, that "what the Innu asked the French when they concluded the deal is that his people would never know hunger. Vincent et Joséphine Bacon, "Les Sources Orales Innues," 60. It is the Innu that asked that. He asked that his people never know hunger until the end of times. The French agreed. And only then, the Innu granted him the coast" (author's translation). ↵
  65. A. J. B. Johnson, *Mathieu Da Costa and Early Canada: Possibilities and Probabilities* (Halifax: Parcs Canada, 2003), 19. ↵
  66. Johnson, *Mathieu Da Costa*, 19. ↵
  67. Peter Bakker, "Basque Pidgin Vocabulary in European-Algonquian Trade Contacts," *Algonquian Papers-Archive* 19 (1988). ↵
  68. Joan M. Fayer, "African Interpreters in the Atlantic Slave Trade," *Anthropological Linguistics* 45, no. 3 (2003): 281–95. ↵
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